

HALL

No. 8.

MARCH 31st.

1920



ALCESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL RECORD.

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In Memoriam.

ALBERT EDWARD ANKER came to A.G.S. in January, 1917, having gained a Newport Foundation Scholarship. His happy disposition soon established him as a favourite with the whole School. He showed all-round promise, being diligent in his school work, and excelling in all games and athletics.

Owing to ill-health he was unable to return to school after the Christmas holidays, and his death, which occurred on Sunday, February 22nd, cast a sad gloom over the School.

A STONE-AGE MAN'S CAMP.

I am standing on the crest of a great furze-covered hill where the wind is so strong that it is hard to stop oneself from being blown down into the valley below. The sides of the hill are very steep, and slope rapidly down to two shallow rivers which curl

around the foot and then wind away in silver streaks up to the distant hills. As far as the eye can see stretch ranges of hills, rising higher and higher until far away among the clouds stands out the grey peak of Plynlimmon. Below me on the left is a narrow fertile valley where sheep, looking no bigger than grains of rice, are grazing. On the opposite side rises a line of wooded hills. To the West there stretches a glorious expanse of sea, and I can hear the breakers rolling in over the long grey beach of pebbles. A huge black bluff, falling sheer down in a drop of six hundred feet, cuts off my view on one side, but on the other I can see right out as far as Bardsey Island.

As one looks around one thinks what a magnificent stronghold the top of this hill would make and this was evidently the opinion of some of our earliest forefathers, for this, according to the archaeologists, was the spot chosen by the Stone Age Man for his home. It was here that he built himself a rude camp where he might seek defence from the beasts or whatever enemies beset him. He feared the dangers of forest-covered valleys, and the fevers of the low-lying districts and sought his home on the tops of the hills. This place has

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splendid natural defences, for on three sides the ascent is very steep, while on the fourth lies the sea. Not satisfied with this, the earliest inhabitants surrounded the crest of the hill with a high earth wall which must have been built several thousand years ago is still standing, except for a small mound left for purposes of outlook. The area enclosed within the wall has been levelled. The wall itself is about ten feet high and fourteen feet across at the base, though it tapers somewhat towards the top. The main opening is most clearly marked, and is the pride of all archaeologists, for it is supposed to be the best existant in Great Britain.

Perhaps even more interesting than the Camp itself are the remains of the actual implements and weapons used by these prehistoric men. A few flint weapons have been found on the hill itself, but the most interesting discoveries have been made on the cliff at the base of the hill. The flint itself they collected on the shore, and then shaped it on a low cliff at the spot where the river joins the sea. Here, if you are lowered down the cliff, you will find buried in the soil the chippings which were broken off the flint as it was being shaped. Sometimes, too, you will find the actual flint instruments, but these are more rare than the chippings. They are evidently the work of human hands, and nearly all are pointed and quite sharp. Besides these you may find here the large round stones, scratched on parts and of a convenient shape to be held in the hand, with which the flint instruments were shaped. The man held the piece of flint between his knees and worked on it with a round stone, chipping off pieces with a circular motion of the arm. Pieces of burnt stone are also found, for, in order to heat his water, prehistoric man heated large pieces of stone and then placed them red hot in the water. This, of course was before the invention of vessels for holding and heating water. One marvels at the skill and ingenuity of these Stone Age Men and this hill, with its camp at the top and its primitive workshop at the foot, is one of the most fascinating of places for those who are interested in the very beginnings of history.

A.P.J.

OF HUMILITY.

(After Bacon).

Wise is the man who hath learnt Humility's bitter lesson. Humility is the hardest test for him who would call himself a follower of Christ. The man who can thoroughly humble himself has reached

the highest state of Godliness. "To be humble is to be godly," saith the most learned Armadanius, and in truth he speaks right. The man who hath humbled himself has, in a tenfold degree, increased in the ways of righteousness. He hath also increased in worldly wisdom. Humility giveth a man a deeper sympathy with those around him. Having been humbled he is better able to sympathise with another's state of mind. If a man's mind be in a state of foolish exaltation the humble one may see and inwardly mock at his shortlived paradise for his experience tells him he needs must fall. Yet if a man be ill at ease and lowly in his mind, he who is humble may sympathise with him the better for his having been humble and so may earn his lifelong gratitude. Many men feign humility that they may falsely gain another's confidence, for he who appeareth to the world as humble and broken is always regarded as one who can be trusted with the secrets of the mind and heart. In appearing humble a man may hide his profundity. The reverend Pontevranda hath ever veiled his vast store of knowledge under humility's unobtrusive veil. The uses of humility are many, they do use it as a veil to their knowledge; the hypocrites use it to appear to have the Godly qualities they have not; the simple do unconsciously use it as a weapon, and verily it is a weapon of great sharpness. "A soft answer turneth away wrath," so doth humility act as a shield against sharp words and cruel deeds. A cruel man may be deceived by humility; he will not consider it worth his while to hurt one who already appeareth crushed. So, if a man would have his enemy in his power, let him not study the art of appearing overpowering to his enemy; let him study the art of humility so that though he may appear to be overpowered by his enemy, his enemy is in truth caught in humility's subtle web.

M.B.

"BLUE MONDAY" IN THE FIFTH.

8.50.—Most of the form have arrived. Sundry exclamations: "Done all your home-work?"—"You can't have my compo.; it's not done."—"Oh, why was Monday ever invented?"

8.55.—First bell rings. All go down to line, some preferring the banisters to the stairs. At last all are arranged in the hall. Almost blown away because

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- prefect insists on the window being open. Same prefect orders us to make less row.
- 9.0. --Prayers and singing. Feel awfully bored after saying "B.A.B.," Bab.
- 9.15. --French. Feeling more bored.
- 9.50. --Maths. Still bored.
- 10.30. --English. More bored than ever.
- 11.10. --Break. Spend all break in cloak-room "feeding" with rest of the form.
- 11.25. --Chemistry. Am bored no longer. Science master in very good temper. Tries to poison us by preparing C. O.
- 12.30. --Once more in agony. Science master questions us about last week's work. Am thankful that he fixes his attention on the poor mortals in front bench. I answer one question properly. Feel decidedly elated.
- 12.45. --Leave the Lab. feeling thankful that the ordeal is over for another week, for Thursday is Practical Chemistry.
- 12.50. --Help to get dinner. Manage to spill water all over the table. Groans heard about soiled state of the plates and knives. Glasses seem scarce, so we use cups.
- 1.30. --Hockey. After all, life is worth living.
- 1.40. --Get a smack on my ankle with a stick. This makes me doubt the truth of the last statement.
- 2.0 --Whistle blows. Go in, in a decidedly bad temper, to get ready for afternoon classes.
- 2.15. --Go upstairs. Scathing remarks passed by boys on our hockey. Reply by insulting their football. Leave the room amidst a shower of books.
- 2.20. --Go into fourth form room for sewing.
- 2.25. --Told to do question on "different kinds of stitches." Bored once more.
- 3.0 --Amuse ourselves by arguing with sewing mistress. The important question is, "Do seams shape a garment?" We say "No!"
- 3.15. --Still arguing. Quite a good way of amusing ourselves. Sewing mistress decidedly grieved by our obstinacy.
- 3.30. --Start sewing. Have not got any more cotton, so sit still.
- 4.0. --Bell rings. Rush upstairs. Everyone eventually goes home, except dancing-class people.
- 4.15. --Trying to do French compo. A weary voice calls, "What is the word for 'river'?" -- "'Riviere,' you silly ass," comes the answer. "That's wrong," says another voice; "it's 'fleuve'." Rather uncomplimentary language flies about.
- 4.30. --Bell rings. Rush down to tea. A wild cry rings through the corridor. One of our most promising dancing pupils has tumbled downstairs. "I've hurt my ankle; I shan't be able to dance," she moans. However, before dancing class she has forgotten all about it.
- 4.35. --Reach dining-room at last. Tea table decorated with various articles that the cooking mistress would probably recognise as some of her cooking utensils.
- 5.45. --Prep. finished. Amuse ourselves with a Jazz Band, composed of various combs, saucepan lids, and a trumpet (the joy of the Fourth). Try to play the Marseillaise. Just doing well when French mistress appears. Although it is French she does not approve. We receive a severe lecture.
- 6.10. --Rush downstairs to change. Forgotten gloves, of course. Someone else has ripped her blouse all down the back, so is in dire distress.
- 6.30. --Class begins with classical exercises. In vain we try to imitate the dancing mistresses. Only succeed in looking like a cross between dilapidated scarecrows and lunatics.
- 6.45. --Certain members of the class are very much amused by our attempts to do some fancy dances. Refuse to try themselves, but sit and criticise us. We don't consider this playing the game.

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- 7.0. —The Lancers, to everyone's joy. Lovely sensation whizzing round in "ladies to the centre." Comes to an end only too quickly.
- 7.30.—Various one-steps, fox-trots, waltz, etc. All enjoying it immensely.
- 7.55.—"Last march or medley," says the dancing mistress. A shout of "The Medley" is heard. The medley we have.
- 8.0. —Dancing class finishes for us. Leave the staff and dancing mistresses in the hall to practise "extra special" dances. We say good-bye—some going to the station looking quite happy; others groaning about a four-mile ride home. They wonder whether they will be murdered on the way.
- 8.10.—Shouts of "Good-bye" are heard. Then gradually the lights of A.G.S. go out, and all is still.
Once more Monday is over!

K. M. P.

IN SPRINGING WOODS.

Long since, in springing woods we lay
And talked of Life, that sunlit day.
Two little sheltered plants, that shook
And swayed, and murmured of the Storm,
The Blizzard; so we called the warm
Soft breeze that wandered in our nook!
We thought we were adult and wise:
We saw all things with our grave eyes.
But then you cried out suddenly,
Struck with impatient hands at where
Strange phantom forms thronged in the air—
Experiences yet to be—
Then pressed your face against the bed
Of brown leaves, rotting-warm and dead.

M.F.

"MODERN METHODS OF AMUSEMENT."
(A Dialogue—intended to be more or less in the
vein of T. L. Peacock).

There is a kind of acquaintanceship which has something of intimacy devoid of the warmth of friendship. Such is often the result of enforced intercourse between two

dissimilar temperaments in a dull rustic locality, like Addleborough-on-the-Slug, where were residing, in the month of November, two unmarried young ladies of vastly different opinions and tastes. One of these, Maeve Droop, had lived for many years—her parents being long dead—with an aged relative in a "modest mansion" situated near the high-road connecting Addleborough and Blewdevelston, two of the most vapid of the vapid country towns so frequently to be found in this country. Her existence was uniform. Books were her companions, and walking her recreation. Of late there had appeared, however, upon the placid surface of her mode of life a faint ripple. This was caused by the fact that a certain young lady, Patricia Robuston by name, hitherto a resident of our great metropolis, had come upon a visit of indefinite length to a neighbouring family. Since this family consisted of a retired Anglo-Indian and his mouse-like spouse, who had long been trained to obey every dictate inspired by the cantankerous liver of her lord, and who found she must consequently exclude all other interests, it resulted naturally enough that their youthful guest should seek the company of one whose disparity of interests was balanced by the equality of her years.

One misty November morning the two young ladies were rambling along the brink of the Slug, whose turbid waters held dim reflections of the chilly trees and of the sullen grey clouds which rolled across the sky. A silence of many minutes' duration was broken by a deep sigh, whereupon Maeve Droop glanced inquiringly at the lugubrious face of her companion. She then resumed her contemplation of the level drab landscape. A little later a yet deeper sigh again drew her attention, and she spoke dreamily—

"There are some scientific authorities who hold that sighing and yawning proceed wholly from derangement of the internal system. Such a derangement is almost invariably found to be the result of wilful gluttony. As a matter of fact, I did observe when I was at your friends' house last night that you applied yourself far

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too heartily to the preserved peaches."

Patricia replied succinctly: "Please do not be idiotic. If I sighed it was because I was realising the ghastly monotony of life in this district. Do you really never *do* anything?"

Maeve D.—As it is, my life is full of occupation and amusement. I grant that perhaps its interests are too fine, too subtle, to be readily appreciated by a modern and vitiated taste. For instance, you are probably oblivious of those beauties of Nature which are at this moment absorbing my rapt spirit.

Patricia R.—No; I am not obtuse to the beauties of Nature. On the contrary, a foaming mountain torrent, snow-capped hills, the endless arcades of a mighty forest, all these would stir me deeply. But I do deny that there is any quality of beauty in the dreary country which surrounds us now.

Maeve.—You must allow me to have scored a triumph. As I said, you are insensible to true natural beauty, which is not the obvious. Let me point out to you the play of shifting delicate half-tones on the surface of the water, which to you, doubtless, is merely a stretch of dull grey. Or contemplate the outline of that hillock to our left, standing in bold relief against the tender vagueness of the sky. And how soul-satisfying are the long level expanses of the fields! How miraculous in their geometrical rigidity are the distant hedgerows! Look! that white road shoots straight into the distance, like a message from Heaven to the human heart. It never falters or deviates. What a lesson we might draw from it! It knows and perfectly fulfils its destined purpose.—that is, to get from Addleborough to Blew-develston as quickly as possible.

I fear I am getting quite carried away; but you understand what endless interest is afforded one by these things.

Patricia.—If I do not, if I am unable to appreciate the æsthetic beauties of ash-heaps, clipped hedges, and dirty water, you can attribute it to the peaches, of course. But what I want to know is whether you have any amusements, apart from these orgies of appre-

ciation.

Maeve.—By amusements I suppose you mean theatres, cinematograph shows, and that foolish and meaningless exhibition of eccentricity into which the exercise of dancing has degenerated. I am thankful to say that if indeed there were facilities available for the depravation of taste in such directions, I should hold serenely aloof from them, in the consciousness that, not being as other girls are, I possess within myself unfailing sources of interest which are unpolluted by the foul current of modernity. However, I am not pharisaical in my views; I do not mind discussing these unpleasing things with you if by so doing I may guide you to a clearer understanding of what composes true pleasure.

Patricia.—Do you actually consider that to attend a theatre is an indication of a depraved mind? Is Shakespeare obnoxious to your ethical scheme of things?

Maeve.—Upon the contrary, I have a strong admiration for Shakespeare, for he was a great student of the psychology of man. Especially is he successful when dealing with the nobler qualities of the human soul. Indeed, in almost every one of his heroines there are traits which I recognise in myself. No; it is the representation of plays which I deplore. Truly to appreciate the works of Shakespeare or of any other dramatist they should be perused over and over again in solitude, far from the glitter, the gaudy confusion of a modern theatre. I grant that formerly, when everyone was not able to read, it was necessary to act plays. Things should be changed nowadays. Besides, I consider that no living actor could improve upon, or even attain to, my own conception of the characters in any play I have read. So much for theatre-going. I have an even greater abhorrence of what are, I think, popularly termed Picture Palaces. That they should be found so tremendously attractive is an indication of the fatal tendency of all things modern towards the blatantly obvious. Thousands have reached such a point in their misguided search for enjoyment that they even refuse to

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spend time in probing the depths of a novel ! They must go to the cinema ; they must behold the actual portrayal of emotions. This modern materialism ! Also, explanation of connecting links of the narrative must be made obvious to them, and they must be left absolutely nothing to work out for themselves.

Patricia.—I think you are forgetting that by the time most people of this kind are ready to take their enjoyment they are exhausted by long hours of labour, and you cannot expect them to goad their tired brains any further.

You say it is the modern desire for the sociable. These people do not want to isolate themselves by plunging into a book, sitting alone in what is, perhaps, a wretched home, or, what is worse, one made unbearable by the squalling and hullabaloo of infantile members of the family. To enjoy themselves they must get out, see, and talk with their friends. The Picture Palace meanwhile affords them shelter and warmth : upon those grounds, if on no other, I defend it. Of course, I know there is much worthless rubbish exhibited, but what is necessary is reform, not abolition.

Maeve.—As you perceive, we have reached my gate, and since I am pleasantly fatigued I will say farewell for the present. There is much which you have not yet permitted me to say. Perhaps you would like a stroll this afternoon. About two miles up stream, from a slight eminence, there are some exquisite tone effects to be gained of factory chimney-smoke in the distance. By the way, I am sorry you are leaving Addleborough to-morrow. Your visit has seemed short, has it not ? However, I hope the seeds of a true knowledge of the inner meaning of enjoyment and happiness which I have implanted will spring up some time in your heart

Patricia wandered on alone, and as she went she sighed profoundly and yawned in utter boredom.

M. F.

IV. B.

IV. B is not the perfect form we imagined it to be when we were in III. A. In fact, it is quite the reverse. Last year we were urged to make an effort to get there by the staff. "Think of the privileges you will get when you are in the Upper School," they used to say. We certainly have had a few, but there the matter ends. I am quite sure that we are the most hard-worked form in the school. Nobody else has their Latin home-work to write out in the morning "just to test their spelling" like we have to, and I'm sure they never have to swallow such insults. Only the other day a mistress remarked on the likeness of IV. B to sheep ! And this was because several girls accidentally (?) dropped their books on the floor, and nearly all the class wanted to sharpen their pencils at the same time. We also have our heads sounded if we can't quite manage our Physics calculations. The master approaches us with a wooden pencil, and with this he vigorously raps against our heads, at the same time remarking, "Hark ! wood against wood." But still I suppose this is one of our privileges, and since IV. B is a very obedient form we meekly reply, "Yes, sir," and rub the place where our insulted brains are supposed to be.

Another thing you get a lot of in IV. B, besides insults, is detention. It seems to come quite naturally when you are in this privileged form. Perhaps it's because our desks get lonely in the dinner hour by themselves ; but whatever it is we are drawn with uncanny regularity to these selfsame desks every Monday and Wednesday dinner-time. This spell ceases to work when it is wet or when there is no hockey ; but on a fine sunny Monday we see our names on the detention list and also on the hockey list. Up we have to go, and politely explain that our presence is needed in IV. B class-room at half-past one. We are called a very uncomplimentary name, and asked, "Why can't you kids do your home-work ? You have always got detention. I shall not bother to put you down again." Our names are crossed off the

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list, and as we learn our Latin words we sorrowfully think of the lovely time we should be having if only we were not in IV. B. Still, we have got a few nice things in IV. B. The boys have the most curly waving crops of hair in the school, and one member worked so hard she nearly had brain fever (at least we like to think she did, if she does not mind). So that shows that IV. B can work. There is one thing I should like to emphatically deny—that is, a supposed inclination to gossip. This is quite untrue. Whatever else IV. B does, it does not gossip.

E. W.

AN IMAGINARY CONVERSATION
BETWEEN NAPOLEON AND THE TSAR
OF RUSSIA, AT THE INTERVIEW
WHICH PRECEDED THE SIGNING OF
THE PEACE OF TILSIT, JULY 7, 1807.

The river Niemen is flowing placidly along. It is the month of July, and the air is calm. A raft is moored in the middle of the rippling river. In a small room on this raft sit two personages. One, reclining in a chair, the best which the raft possessed, may be recognised by his features and his martial figure, so well-known in these days, as the Emperor Napoleon I. of France. The other person is Alexander I., Tsar of Russia. Between the two men is a table, which is littered with maps and documents.

"Well, Monsieur," Napoleon is saying, leaning back in his chair with a self-satisfied air, "I trust you have come to this interview fully prepared to accede to my demands. For I have force behind them; my position is unique in the annals of history; I am almost at the height of my power. Austria lies crushed and submissive at my feet as the result of Austerlitz; Prussia, vainly hoping to succeed against my all-conquering troops by means of her own showy army, was stricken at Jena; and now she, with you yourself, has been completely conquered at Friedland. My armies are within six hundred miles of your capital. You see that it will be wise to agree to my terms." He

ceased, a smile flickering round his proud but refined mouth.

"My illustrious and all-powerful sire," wavered Alexander, with an air of resignation, "Pray let me hear your desires."

Napoleon, gazing through the small window at the fertile land beyond the river, remained silent for some moments. Then, turning with a confident and triumphant gleam in his eyes to the Tsar:

"My conditions, which we will immediately put forth," said he, "are stringent. France is destined to be *the* world power. I must offer to the world the chance of accepting her liberty, her civilization." His olive cheek flushed with enthusiasm. "For that purpose I, as you know, am arranging Germany into a Confederation, over which I shall be Protector. That will be one nation under our enlightened sway. To my control over Germany's affairs you must agree." This with an air of finality and unmistakeable strength of purpose.

"Well," replied Alexander, "do as it pleases you. Who am I to trouble with Germany's destiny?"

"I have re-constituted part of Poland and made it into a new State, Warsaw," pursued the Emperor. "Italy is submissive to me, and I must be recognised as her King"—a pause. "Is this France's liberty and civilization?" thought the Russian. "Is freedom the submitting to an alien despot's rule?" Napoleon's eagle eye noted his hesitation. "Parbleu!" said he, "why do you stop? I ask nothing of you but your consent. Zounds! Do I ask for your crown? Do you consent to this or not?"

"Will Austria agree? Will not this action and policy bring renewed war?" wavered the Tsar.

"Mort du diable! Austria is crushed, I tell you," thundered the French Emperor. "Austria resist!" said he in a sarcastic and disdainful tone. "Do you give *your* consent, *your* signature?"

"Very well, Monsieur, I agree," cringed the Tsar.

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"Further," said the French monarch, "Prussia will be disarmed and re-organised, and I propose to establish a Confederation of the States bordering on the Rhine. You must consent to this."

"What, exactly, does Monsieur mean?" asked Alexander. A lengthy discussion, with reference to maps, ensued. Then at length: "I agree;—but Austria. This must provoke her," stammered the Russian despot.

"Mordi! I tell you Austria *must* submit. She has no alternative. She is crippled," snapped Napoleon. "She has already resigned to me the control of Italy, and in this other matter she must do as I dictate."

"All this will I agree to; but what of my own interests? What of Russia? What do you demand of her?" asked the Tsar, the perspiration standing out on his brow. The conqueror got up from his chair. He walked to the window, his chin in his hand. Then he shrugged his massive shoulders, and stood facing his companion. The shadow of the Corsican's compact figure, thrown by the rays of the summer sun, seemed to the despairing Russian to foretell his own fate. He thought of his country, probably about to be brought to a standstill like the moored raft he was sitting on, while the fortunes of France moved on triumphantly as the river beneath.

A sinister smile broke on the Emperor's lips. "Of your land I ask—none!" he said. The amazed Russian's face flushed with the light of newly-awakened hope. "Your Excellency," he began fawningly.

"I am all-powerful on land," went on Napoleon, cutting him short. "All my enemies are subdued, crippled, save England alone. Ma foi! if only I could remove that one obstacle to my ambitions!" An obsession seized him; his expression became dreamy and pensive; all at once a flash of determination in those lustrous grey eyes seemed to show that even now he was resolved to triumph; at this moment his very soul was surging with hate against the foe whom until now all his genius and strength had not been able to vanquish.

"You must aid me," said he fiercely, "to stifle her, to stamp her to the dust. You must swear to enforce the Berlin Decrees throughout your realm. You must help me in all my schemes against England." His voice rang out with a note of passionate hate. "Is this too great a forfeit for your defeat? I ask nothing more!"

The Tsar considered. This was an unlooked-for leniency on the part of the victor. His throne would still remain to him! His territory was not to be diminished as a result of Friedland! His avaricious soul thrilled with ecstasy at escaping so lightly after daring to resist Napoleon in the field. Fearing that the Emperor's mood would change, the wily Russian solemnly swore by all that he held most dear to do as Napoleon desired.

"Emperor," he said, "I hold myself honoured to be considered an ally of yourself and France!"

Napoleon said nothing. His face expressed serene satisfaction, and the hope of still greater triumphs to come. They proceeded to draw up the documents. There let us leave this greatest of human generals, master-strategist alike both in war and in politics. Little did Alexander dream that his own authority and power were slowly but surely waning and ebbing as he cringingly submitted to all the demands and designs of the then omnipotent French Emperor.

R. H. M.

MODERN METHODS OF TRANSPORT.

When we receive any goods we do not imagine how much we owe to one or two ancient inventions. Practically all the modern methods of transport depend upon two inventions—the invention of the wheel and the invention of the ship. Of these two I think the invention of the wheel was the earlier. Waggon's are first mentioned in the Bible when Joseph sent for his father. This was about seventeen hundred years before Christ. With the exception of the ark, ships are not mentioned until a very much later date.

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From the invention of the wheel we get motors, motor-cycles, bicycles, locomotives, and all other vehicles. From the invention of the ship, of course, we get the steamships and canal barges. In order to find out which is the better method of transport we must judge the weight of goods and the number of persons carried. If we take this view, the railway is the most popular, shipping next, motor-propelled vehicles next, and canal boats last.

The locomotive was invented in the early part of the nineteenth century, and by 1850 many railway companies were formed. The railways when they were private companies were very efficiently organised, and consequently this method of transport was very cheap. At the present time they are under Government control, and are being run at a loss. The railway provides a quick and safe method of travelling. The weight of goods and the number of persons carried by the railways are much greater than the weight and number carried by steamships. In this country, as there is no journey which takes over twenty-four hours, the trains are not very elaborately fitted up. On the main lines the trains have corridor coaches and dining coaches, and sometimes sleeping coaches. In foreign countries, where railway journeys may last a week, the coaches are very luxurious. For example, on one of the South American railways, on some of the trains there is a lounge, in which, I believe, they have a piano.

The application of the steam engine for driving ships did not come until the middle of the nineteenth century. Until then only sailing ships were used. However, now there is hardly a sailing ship to be found. The large passenger ocean-going vessels are called "liners." On one of these it is almost possible to forget that you are on board ship. Everything is done to ensure comfort, and dances and concerts are frequently held.

Motor transport is just beginning to come into its own. The petrol engine was invented in the last part of the nineteenth century, but the commercial vehicle did not prove its value

until the war broke out. Thousands of lorries were made for the army, and war experience has made the petrol engine perfectly reliable. Compared with the railway charges, petrol lorries are not so economical, but the goods are carried right to the door of the consumer, and so are only handled twice instead of four times at least as on the railway, and thus the risk of breakage is minimised.

Motor-cycling is by far the cheapest form of motor transport. Up-to-date merchants have a box-sidecar to deliver small parcels and to carry samples. This method costs under a penny a mile, allowing for the deterioration of the outfit.

Cycling provides a healthy and steady means of transport. The number of bicycles in use easily outnumber all other vehicles.

With the petrol lorry the steam lorry may be classed. At one time the steam car was very popular; but it is not so automatic as the petrol car, and so at present the only type which exists is the heavy commercial lorry.

The transportation of goods by means of the canal barge has been sadly neglected of late. This was at one time a serious rival to the railway, and naturally the railway companies bought the canals and increased the tolls, and so made it almost as dear as transport by the railway. This method of transport was used by the Chinese centuries before the birth of Christ, and even to-day is one of the chief means of transport in that country.

Flight is the future method of transport. This may be divided into two classes—aeroplanes and dirigibles. Aeroplanes are a little faster than dirigibles, and so aeroplanes will be used for mails and for people, and dirigibles will be used for heavier goods. At present when dirigibles are used there is one drawback—the gases used are inflammable, and so it is unsafe. However, when a process is discovered by means of which a gas called helium may be cheaply produced in quantity, this difficulty will be overcome. Already aeroplanes have been used for mails, and a daily service between Paris and London has been kept up since last summer,

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and this has been very successful.

The transport of the future will be by air for long distances and by motor transport or by railway for short distances; but it is not likely that shipping will be superseded for the carrying of large cargoes for many years to come.

E. B.

MR. BURRELL'S RECITAL.

On March 16th we had the "enormousest treat," as I heard some small person afterwards phrase it. This was another visit from Mr. Burrell, which afforded us the sheer delight of an evening in the wonderland of his stories. The question which Mr. Burrell touched upon—whether stories should be illustrated—can receive but one answer, and that a most emphatic one, when story and illustration are in such perfect harmony as on last Tuesday evening. When, through the faery web of rainbow hues that the story-teller weaves, we have the very spirit of the story made visible to our eyes—then is the work of the "magic lantern" magical indeed! The quaint nursery-rhyme effects of the Tale of the Four-and-Twenty Blackbirds; the felicitous absurdities of "The Giant's Quilt;" the fantastic mountain scenery of the "Golden River," where every rock has features to scowl upon or mock the puny human figure struggling past it, upwards to the source of the mighty cataract; the infectious fun of the catastrophes incurred by Epaminondas, that "wee misfortunate mortal;" the weird moments when fair Aryte of the Greek legend is borne—all unwitting that the brother she clasps, the horse they ride, are spectres conjured from the grave-mould—through the flying cloud-rack of the night; all these were rendered by the double charm, leaving us mutely worshipful. . . . And all we can say is: "We can't thank you properly, Mr. Burrell; but please, oh *please*, will you come again?"

M. F.

THE RUMMAGE SALE.

At the end of last term a Rummage Sale was held in the Town Hall in order to obtain the remaining thirteen pounds required to pay for the school piano. The 'Rummage' was collected by the scholars and staff. A few weeks before the event the A. G. S. pupils, usually so prim and proper, could be seen trundling to school with mysterious looking parcels from which protruded toes of old boots, bits of by-gone fineries, ribbons, old umbrellas, etc. We are told that one pupil brought twelve pairs of boots! It is presumed he was a boy as he would be able to get on the soft side of his mother. The sale was opened at 6.30 p.m. with due pomp and ceremony. The excited crowd at the entrance was informed that the fun was to begin by the ringing of a bell. There were five stalls. First, naturally, comes the provision stall. There was a fine display of vegetables of all descriptions, no the least interesting of which was a vegetable shaped like a carrot upon whose species the sellers were undecided. This mysterious vegetable was of a pale pinkish shade, and weighed about two pounds. But whoever saw a beetroot of delicate shell pink? There were also pots of jelly and jam in profusion, substantial home-made cakes, and enough apples to supply a jam factory for one year. Not wishing to appear sarcastic but speaking from "bitter" experience, some of these apples labelled good eaters and looking particularly rosy and cheeky were "crabs." The clothes stall looked very attractive, outgrown children's garments being the chief feature. The boots and shoes stall again showed instances of the child's capacity for outgrowing things. Remarkable bargains could be had here in ancient dancing sandals, which though holy were usually without soles! The hat stall consisted chiefly of battered straw hats, yellow with age, with a few gorgeous feminine creations to add a touch of colour. It is hoped that the public did not judge the literary tastes of the A. G. S. scholars by the miscellaneous collection of books on the book stall! Last, but not least, was the 'oddments' stall. Vast heaps of ornaments, ties, collars, broken toys, photograph frames, not to speak of weird and wonderful hat pins and 'jewellery.'

There is a laughable incident connected with this stall:—When all the stalls had been stripped of their decoration and the crowd had returned to its places of abode, X, a seller, saw three Xmas cards lying on the counter of the oddments stall. A few

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yards off stood an unsuspecting member of the Staff. X went up to him with a professional seller's smile—"Oh, sir! would you buy these cards?" The Master turned upon X fuming with indignation. "I send my rubbish to your old Rummage Sale, and then you expect me to buy it back!"

The sale fully accomplished its purpose. The sum taken was about thirty pounds. The piano is now paid for, and A.G.S. has seventeen pounds to the good, forming the very satisfactory nucleus of a School Fund which may be called upon from time to time as need arises.

M.B.

VARIATION OF BIRD POPULATION.

During the last few years there has been considerable variation in the bird population of this district. This variation has not been merely confined to one particular size of bird, but has involved both large and small.

During the last six years a large increase in the number of larger woodland birds has been noticeable. Magpies frequent the open country far more than hitherto. Until recently I rarely saw a jay, and never found a nest; but during the last two years I have come across quite a number. Kestrel hawks, too, are much more numerous than they used to be. The most interesting bird of all, I think, is the little owl. He is not a native of this country, but was introduced into Epping Forest from the continent some years ago. Since then he has spread rapidly over the country. It was last year that I first saw him when I found two nests of this species: now he may be seen, or at least heard, any evening. The reason for this increase of woodland birds is the reduction in the number of gamekeepers owing to the war. The presence in this country of large numbers of these birds is really a bad thing, for indirectly they encourage the growth of blight by preying upon the smaller insect-eating birds. They are also a menace to the farmer and sportsman, as they are very destructive to chickens and young game.

Owing partly to the increase in large birds which destroy their eggs, and partly to the severe winter of 1916-17, there has been a distinct decrease, during the last few years, in

the number of small birds in this district. Long-tailed tits disappeared for quite a long time, but I am glad to say that I have seen them about again during the last few weeks. As for golden-crested wrens, they seem to be non-existent in the district. I have not seen a member of this species for over two years. Blackbirds and thrushes also suffered heavy losses during that period of prolonged cold, but their numbers are attaining their normal strength once more.

I am glad to say that during last year I noticed a great increase in the number of goldfinches in the neighbourhood. This, I think, is also a by-product of the war, for many goldfinches used to be caught and sold by men who, owing to the war, found better means of employment.

I believe that the increase of large birds and the simultaneous decrease of small birds are closely connected, for magpies, jays, carrion crows, and many others, prey upon the small bird, and in this way many are killed and their eggs destroyed.

R. H. J.

THE SCOUTS.

The Scouts are very keen on having a Summer Camp this year. They have not been able to bring this off before owing to the war, but it seems quite possible now if the necessary funds can be raised. For this purpose the Scouts are preparing an entertainment for March 25th and 26th, and will give a gymnastic display on Tuesday, March 30th.

The Band is progressing under Mr. Lester, but more players are wanted.

The smiling face of Eddie Anker has been much missed by the Troop. He died on February 22nd, after a short illness. Four Scouts acted as bearers at his funeral, and most of the others followed in the procession. He was a very good Scout, and seemed to live up to the Scout law: "A Scout whistles and sings under all difficulties."

The troop numbers 41 this term.

E.B.

Through pressure on our space we are compelled to hold over several articles until our next issue.—
Ed., A.G.S.R.

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